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LETTERS

NICE ON LUNG CANCER

Palliative care: emphasis on early integration with oncology care

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The guideline for diagnosing and managing lung cancer, published for the benefit of non-specialists, did not mention palliative care, a key component of care for people with life threatening illnesses.¹

By failing even to mention that palliative care should be considered is misleading to general practitioners, at whom the article was targeted. Established best practice guidelines recommend provision of palliative care by primary care teams with access to specialist advice, even while patients are receiving oncology treatment.^{2,3} For patients with metastatic non-small cell lung cancer, early palliative care significantly improves mood, quality of life, utilisation of health care, and survival.⁴⁻⁶

Primary care professionals can play a crucial part in providing early palliative care in the community to the benefit of many. Let's encourage them to provide this in the guidance they get.⁷

Competing interests: None declared.

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